

Remarks

Claims 11-17 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Richter et al. (Patent No. 5,905,885) in view of Hall, Jr. et al. (Patent No. 6,346,842).

In response, independent claim 11 has been amended to emphasize distinguishing features over these references. Specifically, at least some of the claimed electrical device receivers are now defined in the claim as having reception interfaces that are compatible with the connection interfaces of at least two different types of electrical devices which have different respective connection interfaces. The interconnection network that interconnects the controllers and receivers is now defined in the claim as including a plurality of sets of zero ohm resistor terminals that are connectable by a first pattern of zero ohm resistors to establish a first interconnection pattern between the controllers and a first combination of electrical device types in said receivers, and by at least one different zero ohm resistor pattern to establish different respective interconnection patterns between the controllers and different respective combinations of electrical device types in the receivers. Each of the different interconnection patterns is compatible with its respective combination of electrical device types.

Examples of specific zero ohm resistor and interconnection patterns are given in the present application in FIGs. 4a-4d and the accompanying text at page 9, line 12 - page 11, line 10. An example of a

receiver with a reception interface that is compatible with multiple different device connection interfaces is a 64-bit pin receptacle array that is compatible with both 32- and 64-bit pin devices, illustrated in FIG. 2a and discussed at page 6, lines 8-17.

In Richter et al. the "electrical device receivers" are identified in the Office action as disk drive 114 and 115, and elements 118 and 119 that are not mentioned in the specification but which receive PCMCIA cards 122 and 123 in PCMCIA expansion slots 116 and 117.

There is no disclosure or suggestion in Richter et al. of any of the "electrical device receivers" 114, 115, 118, 119 being capable of receiving different types of electrical devices, or having a reception interface that is compatible with different device connection interfaces. Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Richter et al. that the interconnection pattern between the "controllers" and the "receivers" could be altered in accordance with the types of devices in the receivers. For example, in Richter et al. FIG. 1A the "controller" interface board 104 is coupled to the disk drives 114 and 115 by a cable 110 which allows the interface board 104 to communicate with the disk drives 114 and 115 (column 1, lines 46-49), while the additional interface board 102, to which the "controller" CPU system bus 146 is connected, connects to "receivers" 118 and 119 via cables 112 and 113, respectively. There is no suggestion that either of the "controllers" in Richter et al. could be connected to any of the "receivers" other than the ones to which they are actually connected in the circuit of FIG. 1A. Accordingly,

Richter et al. neither discloses nor suggests (1) receivers having reception interfaces that are compatible with the different connection interfaces of different types of electrical devices, (2) different interconnection patterns between controllers and different respective combinations of electrical device types in the receivers, nor (3) different patterns of zero ohm resistors establishing such different interconnection patterns. Nor do the zero ohm resistors disclosed in Hall, Jr. et al. suggest the configurable circuit board capability of claim 11.

Claims 12-17 and 20 all depend directly or indirectly from claim 11, and accordingly should be allowable along with claim 11. Since claims 18 and 19 have already been allowed and the remaining claims have been withdrawn, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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